

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 016820

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E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: MASS, KS, US

SUBJECT: IBM REPORT ON CANCELLATION OF ROK WEAPONS PROGRAM

1. WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE OF IBM CALLED EA/K DIRECTOR JANUARY 25 TO INFORM HIM OF REPORT THAT PRESIDENT PARK HAD ORDERED CANCELLATION OF "TWO PROJECTS WHICH WERE AROUSING U.S. DISPLEASURE". IBM REPRESENTATIVE SAID REPORT HAD COME THROUGH IBM REPRESENTATIVE IN HONG KONG, DON BLACK, WHO HAD RECENTLY MADE TRIP TO SEOUL. DURING VISIT, BLACK WAS TOLD BY PRESIDENT OF THE HONG NUNG MACHINE COMPANY, WHICH HAD PLACED THE ORDER FOR THE IBM 158/370 COMPUTER, THAT HE HAD BEEN INFORMED PERSONALLY BY PRESIDENT PARK THAT THE TWO PROJECTS WERE TO BE CANCELLED. (WASHINGTON IBM REPRESENTATIVE CLAIMED NOT TO KNOW WHAT THE TWO PROJECTS WERE.) PRESIDENT PARK ALSO ORDERED HONG NUNG PRESIDENT TO CANCEL ALL ORDERS HIS FIRM HAD PLACED ABROAD FOR EQUIPMENT RELATED TO THESE PROJECTS. HONG NUNG PRESIDENT ASSURED BLACK THAT IBM COMPUTER WAS NOT TO BE USED IN ANY PROJECT

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TO WHICH THE U.S. MIGHT OBJECT AND REITERATED HIS FIRM'S CONTINUED INTEREST IN ACQUIRING IT.

2. AFTER RECOUNTING ABOVE REPORT, WASHINGTON IBM REPRESENTATIVE SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THERE NOW SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM IN USG'S APPROVING SALE OF IBM COMPUTER TO ROK FIRM. EA/K DIRECTOR GAVE A NON-COMMITTAL RESPONSE.

3. COMMENT: ON ONE HAND, IBM ACCOUNT MAY BE INDICATION THAT ROKG MOVING AHEAD WITH SUSPENSION PLANS. ON THE OTHER, FACT THAT REPORTED DECISION OF PRESIDENT PARK NOW BEING OPENLY DISCUSSED WITH AMERICANS AND BEING USED AS RATIONALE FOR CONTINUED SALE BY U.S. OF CERTAIN SENSITIVE ITEMS TO ROK WOULD SEEM TO RAISE QUESTION ABOUT ACTUAL ROKG MOTIVES.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMS, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 25-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Drafter: EHURWITZ
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Format: TEL
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